

that the date of the second record at Bishopsteignton, S. Devon, in 1964 should be 20.ix. (*not* 1.ix. as printed); and that altogether *three* specimens were reported there in 1964, though the date of the third is uncertain. He also tells me that for Minstead, Hants, 1965, there is only a single record, on 27.x. (*not* two, on 27.viii. and 24.x., as printed). — R. F. BRETHERTON, Folly Hill, Birtley Green, Bramley, Surrey. 10.i.71.

*HELOPHILUS CONSIMILIS* MALM (DIPTERA: SYRPHIDAE) IN EAST GLAMORGAN.—My observations over the past five years have led me to the conclusion that this attractive but allegedly rare hover-fly is not only maintaining a foothold in one East Glamorgan habitat (the precise location of which is withheld for conservation reasons) but may even be increasing its numbers.

The colony first came to my notice on June 5th 1966, when four insects which I had on first sight assumed to be either *Helophilus versicolor* F. or *H. frutetorum* F. proved, on closer examination, to be *H. consimilis*. The discovery of this species has prompted me to revisit the site each year since, at approximately the same date.

The 1967 and 1968 visits were fruitless, possibly due to the unfavourable weather conditions prevailing at those times, but on June 7th 1969 I was again rewarded by the sight of three males of *H. consimilis*, this time in company with *H. pendulus* L. and *H. lineatus* F.

This year, on June 6th 1970, although no other species of the genus were recorded, *H. consimilis* was again present and in such numbers that I was unable to count it.

With the solitary exception of one male, taken at Hawthorn blossom at a height of about eight feet above the ground, all the specimens observed, on all three occasions, were flying low over or amongst damp lakeside vegetation, and none were seen to stray more than a few yards from the water's edge. Could these unobtrusive habits have perhaps given the species an undeserved reputation of rarity, when "local" may be a more apt definition of its distribution?—A. W. PEARCY, 6 Melbourne Road, Llanishen, Cardiff. 13.xii.1970.

*HALISODOTA TESSELLARIS* ABBOT AND SMITH (LEP. ARCTIIDAE)—A batch of ova which I received from North America in late June, were spherical and shining pearly white; less than a week later the heads of the developing larvae were clearly visible as large black spots occupying most of the space inside the top third of each egg.

The newly hatched larvae consumed very little, if any, of their eggshells, and during this first stage, they were very pale grey, virtually hairless and with large black heads.

In their natural state they feed on the foliage of many kinds of trees and shrubs, seeming to have a special liking for *Robinia*, but among various foodplants offered in captivity, rambler rose seemed to be preferred. During the later stages,

oak and sawall were readily accepted, but willow was refused.

At the second instars a few hairs appeared and the thoracic and eleventh segments became yellow. Later the larvae were sparsely covered with whitish hairs, the body being light yellowish grey with black subdorsal lines edged inwardly with numerous small black dots. The head remained black throughout larval life.

At the penultimate instar the larvae were fairly densely clothed in whitish grey hairs, partly hiding the body markings which had become darker, and included a dark dorsal line. The deep yellow colour fore and aft being still visible through the hairs. In addition there were long slender tufts of black hairs at the front and rear of the larva, reminding one of some of the Lymantriids.

In the final instar the likeness to the Lymantriids was increased when further long slender tufts, some black and others white, made their appearance, the thoracic tufts pointing upwards, sideways, and straight forward, whilst a pair of black tufts on the eleventh segment were directed outwards and rearwards at an angle of about  $45^{\circ}$  to the body. At this stage the remainder of the body was covered with greyish brown tufts of shorter hairs.

In September the full-fed larvae descended to the bottom of the cage, and constructed their light greyish-brown close-fitting cocoons, with more body hairs than silk. Some were just below the soil surface and others were spun en masse on top of the soil. The cocoons were not attached to anything, and even where several larvae had selected the same corner of the cage, the individual cocoons were not attached to each other, and were very easily separable.

The shining reddish brown pupae were typical Arctiid shape, and the moths which emerged the following June were surprisingly large for the cocoons which had contained them. The illustration of this moth in W. J. Holland's *The Moth Book* does not do full justice to this species, either in the earlier edition or in the later one. The body and legs are pale yellow. The ground colour of all the wings is light cream, and the darker cross lines of the forewings are finely edged with black. The forewing markings are quite distinct, but the hindwings are without markings. On the edge of the lappets there is a small pale blue streak which is nevertheless conspicuous on account of its strongly contrasting colour.—JOHN L. GREGORY, 17 Grove Road, St. Austell, Cornwall. 6.ii.1971.

THE FUTURE OF THE NEW FOREST. — Many readers will probably be aware that the future of the New Forest is at present under consideration, the outcome of which could cause probably more profound changes than at any time past. Basically it is whether the forest should be developed to a far greater extent for the production of softwoods (i.e. conifers). I understand that the Minister of Agriculture, who will be making the decision, is intending to visit the New